

## Introduction

The alternatives presented in this document establish broad guidelines for achieving the purpose of New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park. This section discusses the potential impacts of implementing each alternative. Each analysis is followed by a conclusion statement that assesses and quantifies the nature of the impacts. In addition, information on cumulative impacts, unavoidable adverse effects, and other consequences is provided for each alternative.

Individual projects called for in this plan, such as the construction of a visitor center, will require additional environmental analysis and documentation to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). These compliance actions will be initiated when construction details are more fully defined.

### **RATIONALE FOR IMPACT TOPICS**

New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park is a non-traditional unit of the national park system. The unit contains no firm boundaries, and its sphere of influence potentially extends over much of the New Orleans metropolitan area. The park's primary resources — jazz and the environs in which it evolved — are likewise non-traditional. The impacts topics selected for this analysis reflect these conditions and largely revolve around the issues identified in the "Purpose of and Need for the Plan" and "Affected Environment" sections. Resources and environmental concerns that are not appreciably affected by alternative actions have been eliminated from further consideration and comparative analysis.

### **IMPACTS DISMISSED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION**

The alternatives presented in this document would not have discernible negative impacts to the following resources.

### **Floodplains and Wetlands**

The entire greater New Orleans area is in a floodplain; however, numerous flood preventive measures have been developed to protect the city. The National Park Service would follow procedures already in place for evacuation in times of flooding. All park artifacts would be placed in areas where they were protected from flood damage. The National Park Service would ensure that any activities undertaken would conform to established regulations.

### **Water Resources / Air Quality**

The construction of park facilities could result in impacts from water runoff. This impact would be temporary and would be mitigated by using silt fencing, retention ponds, and other site-specific containment measures. All disturbed areas would be revegetated so that no long-term siltation impacts from runoff would occur.

Temporary impacts to air quality could be caused by construction and demolition of facilities. These would primarily involve temporary increases in particulates (fugitive dust) and vehicle emissions (where motorized equipment is used). Mitigating measures (such as watering to keep the dust down) would be taken to limit even temporary and localized impacts.

Mardi Gras, jazz festivals, and other programmed events could draw sizable numbers of visitors in motorized vehicles. These visitation levels could raise vehicle emissions to levels that exceeded attainment standards. However, these temporary increases in emissions would be localized and short in duration.

Non-events related park to visitation should not significantly add to air emissions in New Orleans because

- a substantial amount of park visitors would be using existing public transportation or would be walking
- a significant number of park visitors would have come to the city for reasons other than just a park visit

If these assumptions were to prove incorrect when the park begins operations, monitoring would be undertaken to determine the extent of added air emissions coming from park visitation and corrective measures would be developed.

### **Vegetation and Soils**

In each alternative, the total disturbance to vegetation and soils would be very minor (less than 2 acres). Most disturbance, if not all, would take place in previously disturbed areas, further reducing the overall impact. Mitigation techniques would be used to reduce impacts to the minimum necessary to accomplish the objective. Mitigation would include carefully selecting sites, salvaging topsoil and plant material, and rehabilitating disturbed areas. Should facilities be removed, the disturbed areas would be rehabilitated and revegetated with native plants.

### **Threatened, Endangered, and Species of Special Concern**

Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the state of Louisiana indicated that no federally or state-listed threatened or endangered species or state species of concern were located in the park environs.

### **Environmental Justice Policy (Executive Order 12898)**

Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority

Populations and Low-Income Populations," requires all federal agencies to incorporate environmental justice into their missions by identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs and policies on minorities and low-income populations and communities.

For the purpose of fulfilling Executive Order 12898, in the context of National Environmental Policy Act, the alternatives addressed in this plan were assessed during the planning process. It was determined that none of these actions would result in significant direct or indirect negative or adverse effects on any minority or low-income population or community.

The following facts contributed to this conclusion:

- The developments and actions found in alternatives would not result in any identifiable adverse human health effects. Therefore, there would be no direct or indirect negative or adverse effects on any minority or low-income population or community.
- The impacts to the natural and physical environment that would occur due to implementation of any of the alternatives would not significantly or adversely affect any minority or low-income population or community.
- The alternatives would not result in any identifiable effects that would be specific to any minority or low-income community.
- The planning process has had a public participation process and has equally considered all public input from persons regardless of age, race, income status, or other socioeconomic or demographic factors. This process included interested individuals and groups representing local community populations.